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197 and Moselekatsi amalgamated clans and tribes under their military rule, and could not subsist unless they maintained a despotic domination over them ; they were an aristocratic race and considered their language as superior. Ruling by fear and by the sword, they purposely remained aliens amongst the enslaved tribes. Quite different was the spirit of the ancient invaders of 1400 or 1500 A. D. They had not such an ideal of vast domination ; they operated on a much smaller scale : they were satisfied to take the chieftainship from the aborigines, and quickly mingled with them, married their daughters (as they still do) and so became one with them.

Would the Ba-Ngoni have been able, in course of time, to establish their Zulu dialect instead of the Thonga, if the Portuguese had not broken their power ? It is impossible to say. They had succeeded in imposing all their Zulu terminology in military matters. Meanwhile the women were not learning Zulu and the women are the best safeguards of the purity of the language amongst primitive peoples. Therefore I do not think they would have been able to uproot the old language, which must have been spoken for many centuries in Thonga territory.

My conclusion is then that the Thonga language was already spoken by the primitive occupants of the country more than 500 years ago and that, together with a certain number of customs, it formed the great bond which bound the Thonga clans together in past centuries.

181 703 2) *Mental characteristics of the Thongas.* We shall only ask how the Thongas compare with the Zulus or Suthos as regards character, and especially from a military point of view.

Having had the opportunity to witness a war in which the Nkuna chief Muhlaba was allied with the Pedi chief Maaghe, in the Zoutpansberg, I can testify that the Thongas had ten times as much military spirit

Phot. C. Liengme.

"Initiated" Thonga warrior.

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the Pedis. I saw the two armies, the same day, preparing for the same battle. The Thongas were armed to the teeth, forming a great circle, all standing, shouting their war songs, gesticulating, jumping, imploring their chief to allow them to start. The Pedi warriors were sitting under trees, taking their snuff and apparently as calm as any other day.

During the Gungunyane war, the Thongas were brave, at least those not entirely dependent on the Ngoni king, who had not allowed his warriors to kill white men. The Rongas of Mpfumu especially showed great courage and endurance, and those who served the Portuguese in their Angola war have been praised as being very steady and reliable.

On the other hand everything seems to prove that military ability is not an ancient feature of the Thonga character, and that it has been imparted to them by the Zulus, who taught them the art of fighting during the last century, pushing them to the front in their battles and calling them "Mabuyandlela," "those who open the way." Before the Ngoni invasion, the Thonga armies were ignorant of the *mukhumbi* viz. the armed circle of warriors which is the basis of the Zulu military system; (See Part IV) : they used to form themselves into a straight line and, in their battles, very few men were killed. They were normal Bantu clans, viz. people living peacefully, occasionally quarrelling with their neighbours. The idea of conquest, of vast dominion, the system of an armed nation which Chaka and his followers pursued, was something new amongst South African Natives and was probably borrowed by Dingiswayo from the Whites. This fact ought not to be ignored.

Under a just European supervision, there is no probability that the Thonga tribe will change its peaceful and mild charcter.

3) *Physical characteristics of the Thongas.* It cannot be said that the Thongas possess a very distinct and unique physical type. They are generally of a dark brown colour, sometimes purely black, much darker than the Suthos. As a whole, their external appearance bears a much closer resemblance to that of the Zulus, but, as regards face and stature, they vary very much. You may meet Thongas with typical negro faces, broad lips, flat

175 These Zulus or Ngonis taught the tribes of the plain a system
177 of war much more cruel than the old one: "kill everything,"
726 — such is the rule. No exception is made except in the case
703 of women, who are taken prisoners. The Thonga clans readily accepted this new mode of fighting. They adopted the Zulu system wholesale, the proof of which is that all their military terminology is pure Zulu. Their apprenticeship began during the invasion; the Ba-Ngoni seeing that the Thongas had a certain aptness for war, incorporated them into their own regiments and used to send them forward to the attack, as previously mentioned. They praised them by calling them the *Mabuyandlela* — those who prepare the way, — a kind of nickname which the Thongas have kept to this day and of which they were very proud.

721 However I do not think it would be unfair to the Thongas
175 to assert that the old peaceful basis of their character is still
703 preserved, notwithstanding this influence. We have had an opportunity of judging of their warlike capabilities during the war of 1894-1896 with the Portuguese. (See Appendix X, Short account of two South African wars.) The Natives did not fight from choice. While some of them gave proof of great endurance, and the army fought in some cases with a certain tenacity, Thongas and especially Ba-Ronga did not show themselves very able warriors. Want of discipline, mutual distrust, timidity resulting in frequent retreats, inability to follow up their successes, such were the main causes of their defeat. The wild soldiers of Maputju, who considered themselves the equals of the genuine Zulus, showed their courage only when there was no danger!

B. WAR COSTUME AND WEAPONS.

714 One day when we were comfortably seated under the beautiful tree at our station of Rikatla, a strange looking monster suddenly appeared on the scene, running towards us! The children fled and the women hid themselves... It was Charley, our milk-man, who, with some other warriors, was going to a military review, to be

726 703 Before going into battle, certain rites have to be accomplished. In order to stimulate a war-like courage and to imbue the warrior's minds with a certainty of victory, it is necessary to proceed to the performance of the war-songs (guba), of the war dances (gila), and to administer the medicine which will render the soldiers invulnerable.

E. WAR SONGS.

533 539 The performance of war songs is called *guba*. I have already fully described the Mpfumo national song, (p. 373) which would seem to be more adapted to celebrate a coronation than to serve as an incentive to battle ; it is however used indiscriminately for both purposes.

Another war-song which is very popular in the Mpfumo clan is the following :

Zulu : U ngwa si mu thini, Mayeye ?
U banga muhlaba, u bulala bantu !
Ronga : U ta ku mu yini, Ñwayeye ?
U banga ntlhaba, u dlaya bhanu !
What will you succeed in doing to him, Ñwayeye ?
You take the country and slay the people !

This is a question addressed to Ñwayeye, the rival of the chief Zihlahla ; Ñwayeye was placed in authority near Lourenço Marques by the Portuguese between 1860 and 1870. He accepted the position, but was unable to retain it any length of time, and the recollection of his failure is perpetuated in this song which is intended to extol the royal family of Mpfumo.

A third song, also in vogue with the Mpfumo warriors, runs thus :

Zulu : Zi m' thini ? A ha ze zi ha bona, abantu bezizwe !
Ronga : Hi ta ku yini ? A ha ta hi ha bona, bhanu ba matiko !
What shall we say ? Let them come and let us see them, the people of the enemy's country !

This is a defiance hurled at the adversaries.

F. THE WAR DANCE.

535 The *guba* is itself a kind of war dance, as dancing does not mean a change in the dancer's position. Nodding with the head, gesticulation of the hands and slow motions of the feet constitute a dance (kina). In some guba songs, there may be a backward and forward movement of all the warriors to widen or narrow their circle. I have even seen men crossing the mukhumbi, two by two, or three by three, during the guba.

But the true war-dance is the *gila* (Ro.) or *giya* (Dj.) the representation of deeds of valour by warriors who have killed an enemy in battle. The massed chorus of the guba is most imposing, but still more deeply does the *gila* impress one by its wildness. Look at this elderly man who suddenly detaches himself from the circle, stamping with all his might on the ground. His feet beat the earth in cadence, one blow being long, the three following ones short: -ooo. He goes on, making the ground shake, brandishing his weapons with all his might, perspiring from his efforts and pronouncing Zulu words which the throng interrupts by wild shoutings, as if to encourage him... Then he returns to his place, and the whole army concludes the performance by a kind of whistling : zu... iiiiii. ..... prolonged on a high and piercing note, which suddenly descends to a deep and guttural tone : i. aaaaa..... He has hardly resumed his place in the ranks when a young man springs into the circle, jumping like an antelope, holding his assagai and gesticulating all the while, as if transfixing an invisible enemy. His eyes glare like those of a wild beast, and immediately the army entones a song, his song, the one which has been composed to glorify his deed. Possibly his return to the ranks will be greeted by another shout : I..a...Nda-u! — Lion! comparing him to a lion returning to his forest which nobody will dare to attack. The encouragement given by the warriors to the *bagili* and their great final cry are called *khuza* or *khunzela*.

535 703 "At that very moment," says Mankhelu, "the hearts of the young men tremble in their breasts! Their hair stands on end...

535 An extraordinary war spirit comes over them all..." And every
703 one having witnessed these performances in the Thonga or Zulu mukhumbi will confess that they are wonderfully impressive. It is a mixture of dramatic, epic and lyric poetry, three literary *genres* which are still confounded, the whole being enhanced by a deep, wild music and subject to the laws of a certain artistic style.

703 The fighting instincts are excited to the highest pitch by these
643 patriotic choruses and dramatic representations. Thus should
726 the troops be slow in making a start, the young men go dancing to the chief and beg him to "grant them permission" to go forth and slay, or rather to "give them men" to slaughter (ku nyika). The Native idea appears to be that the chief holds the lives of the enemies in his hands ; without his permission they cannot go forward, but this once given, they rush enthusiastically to the fray. They even go so far as to taunt him with being an old woman, a coward, because he will not let them go at once (1).

When the excitement has reached the culminating point, and it has been definitely decided to fight, the time has arrived for the magic treatment by which the warriors will be rendered invulnerable.

G. ADMINISTERING THE WAR-MEDICINE.

726 This custom is probably of ancient origin, but I have reason
177 to believe that, amongst the Ba-Ronga, it was practised without
789 any great formality until the advent of the Zulu influence, when
751 it was brought into much greater prominence and invested with more solemnity. "Drinking the war-medicine" took place on several occasions during the revolt of 1894 to 1895. At *Zihlahla* this potion was administered to all warriors before the rebel attack

(1) Gungunyana, on one occasion, when his warriors were importuning him with similar requests, sent the more ardent spirits to wage war unarmed against the wild beasts, and I was told they actually succeeded in capturing a leopard alive and brought it back to the chief !

726 and Mahazule, who had taken refuge in Gaza, during July-August 1895.
175 Nine regiments, representing a large effective force, were to start from Manzimehlope, the country beyond the Nkomati River; three of these were to ascend the left bank of the river, to cross it in the neighbourhood of Komati-Poort and to enter Swaziland, the Ngoni chief having made alliance with the Swazis. The other regiments were to cross the Nkomati to the West of the Sabie, and thence to go southward by Moveni. The remaining three, with whom were incorporated Zihlahla and Mahazule, were to ravage Shirindja, Ntimane and Nondwane, passing about one hour's march to the West of Lourenço Marques, exterminating the inhabitants of Matjolo (allies of the Whites), whose retreat to the town would be thus cut off... The nine regiments were to effect a junction at a place called Nkobotlwene, to the South of the Bay, where the forces of Gungunyana would fraternise with those of Maputju, with whom they were on good terms. For the space of seven months, tens of thousands of these warriors were to overrun the country
726 and to annihilate all the tribes opposed to Gungunyana. The chief
609 would not massacre the Whites, nor would he attack their town: he
173 calculated on rendering them powerless by depriving them of the assistance of their Black allies, and expected them thus to sue for peace on honourable terms! Such, at least, was the plan of campaign which transpired after Gungunyana had been made prisoner, in the centre of his own country of Gaza, by a party of about forty White soldiers! The whole thing culminated in a single day's skirmish in the Ntimane country. The petty chiefs quarrelled amongst themselves; only a few hardy warriors dared to cross the Nkomati and slaughtered some women at a short distance from the outpost of Chinabane. Finding themselves discovered, they at once recrossed the river and made off to the Northward.

578 The principal causes of the incapacity in military matters so noticeable amongst the Blacks during the war of 1894-1896, are doubtless the *internal jealousies* between the tribes and also, it must be said, the mysterious dread inspired by the White race, their artillery and their superior discipline.

726 The feeling of mistrust existing between Matjolo and Nwamba,
175 Nondwane, Zihlahla and Shirindja, also explains the terrible *panics*
703 which occured during the military operations. On several occasions the Native forces were subject to panics which might have entailed the most serious results. As an instance I relate the following, which nearly led to the partial destruction of the Matjolo army. The Matjolo

726 warriors, as also those of Nwamba, had received orders from the
173 Whites, at the end of January 1895, to attack Zihlahla and Mahazule.
703 One of the young men of Matjolo, who was present during the operations, told me this story : "We were to have joined the men of Nwamba at a village called Mukapan, but did not find them at the rendez-vous. As they had made common cause with Zihlahla at the beginning of the revolt, we had not much confidence in them. It looked as if they were in hiding and intended to attack us treacherously and kill us. At this time two panics occured. The first was at Hukwen, when a man dreamt that he was being killed, and cried out : "Yo! Uwe! There are people who are killing me!" It was pitch dark. Every one jumped to his feet. Some ran to hide in the forest, but others shouted : "The enemy are here!" Fighting began in the regiment of Geba, (composed of men of the same age as Sigaole, the chief), but no one was killed. A few individuals who kept their presence of mind restored order, but we came very near exterminating each other! The next night a Chopi of our troop had a fright, and cried out : "Why do you want to kill me, you men of Matjolo ? I will tell Sigaole's mother." He was promptly secured and forced to keep quiet for fear that he would rouse the Nondwane people, etc. A similar panic seized the troops of Mahazule, when they went to lay waste the country round Lourenço Marques (October 1894).

726 To avoid these panics, as far as possible, the Ba-Ronga arrange a
192 *password* before starting on an expedition. I was able to learn two of these countersigns, after the war, by questioning some young men who had taken part in certain military operations. On one occasion the pass-word was as follows : "Be ge pi ?" These are Zulu words signifying : "What are you looking at ?" The requisite answer being : "Be ge pezulu"—"We are looking at the sky." In the famous attack made by the Zihlahla warriors on the town of Lourenço Marques, on 14th October 1894, the word was : "U landu bane ?"—"With whom have you a quarrel ?"—and the reply : "Ngi landa Mlungu!"—"I have a quarrel with the white man!"

727 *Return from the battle.* When a yimpi has been defeated in
765 battle, but is not pursued by the enemy, it returns silently and disperses before reaching the capital, each warrior going back ashamed to his village. Mourning takes place in the villages of the deceased. But much lamenting is not allowed. It may be that the chief will prohibit any mourning if many have been

727 765 killed, "because the whole country would mourn : — they have not been killed by the mat (likuku) at home, but by the assagai on the battle-field! They are men! If any one weeps he will have to pay £ 2." (Mboza.)

726 763 When the Maputju yimpis fought against Nondwane in 1876, in the battle which took place near Malangotiba, (3 km west of Rikatla), they were decimated and eventually repulsed. Their chief Musongi sent them back to fight again. They refused. Then he punished them in the following way : he condemned them to go and fetch water with pots, like women, but they had to go on their knees to the pool, saying : "It is the result of our cowardice" — (Ngi ndaba ya bugwala). Afterwards they had to extinguish a bush fire with their hands, and came home very much scorched and burnt.

When the yimpi is victorious, the return is marked by important 727 songs called *hubu* (cl. dji-ma). The regiments follow each other, 533 each singing his own *hubu*, and they at once build the mukhumbi 535 when they reach the village of the chief. They dance, dance their doughty deeds. Suddenly silence is required ; the counsellors narrate to the chief how the fighting has proceeded and tell him the names of those who have killed enemies, those who have struck the first blow and their *bahlomuri*, viz., those who transfixed the leg and the arm. After which the heroes "gila" to their heart's content, together with the bahlomuri. They are proud! They are applauded! They are the great men of the day, the *tingwaza*, the saviours of the chief!

This leads me to consider the very curious customs connected with the slayers and the slain on the battle-field.

1. THE FATE OF THE SLAIN AND THE TREATMENT OF THE SLAYERS.

1. *The fate of the slain.*

554 When a man has slain an enemy, he has covered himself with 727 the most enviable glory : he has the right to perform the war-dance before the chief. He takes away all the garments from

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727 enemy died later on, after his return to his home. Makhani did not
828 know this. One day he became suddenly delirious and rushed about
789 all over the village trying to stab his own people. "Oho!" said those
783 who saw him, "it is because the man he wounded has died!" They at once called the magician who possessed the nuru medicine, a man of the Mapsanganye clan, who came with his calabash. In this calabash there was a carved stick cut from a tree called shiralala, the extremity of which must always remain plunged in the medicine. The magician dipped this stick into a mixture made of honey and the drug, and passed it over the lips of Makhani, who seized it with his tongue, sucking it as the magician moved it from right to left, and licking his lips. A drop of the medicine was then put into each ear, on each upper eye-lid, and below the sternum. He was then cured and, taking a lighted torch, he threw it in the direction of the enemy's country with threatening words: "A ba fe, bafo, ba bola i. e. Let them die, the enemies, let them rot. I will kill still others!" Every day he had to go to the pool and wash his body, treating himself with the tintebe powder.

727 During the weeks following the battle heroes do not only
301 wear the tintebe, besides these miluru amulets, they have the
703 right to wear certain trophies. These are in the first place
554 antelope or goat's horns pierced at the base; they thread a string through the hole thus made and tie them round their necks (See illustrations, p. 33 and 453). They also make necklaces of small pieces of wood, notched in a peculiar manner and burnt in the fire; a hole is made through these and they are strung together like beads and worn round the neck. Sometimes these necklaces are made so long that they are worn as a bandoleer. I recollect seeing the Matjolo warriors returning from their expedition of February 1895: they came to show themselves off to the Whites at Lourenço Marques, gloriously proud of having massacred defenceless women and children whom they had surprised in the early hours of the morning! People threw them pieces of silver which they converted into brandy! (1)

727 (1) The terrible malediction which rests on those who have killed an enemy,
775 is well illustrated by the following story which the Rev. C. Maphophe told me of an
761 event that had taken place not long ago in the Shishangi country (Manyisa district). A man of the Ndzundzu family had killed a Ndjao during one of Gungunyana's expedi-